

TEEN AGE RIOT by [witchkings](#)

Series: [woke up a rebel](#) [2]

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Angst, BAMF Nancy Wheeler, Billy Hargrove Being an Asshole, Billy Hargrove is His Own Warning, Canon-Typical Violence, Character Development, Developing Friendships, Developing Relationship, F/M, Fix-It, Friends to Lovers, Good Babysitter Steve Harrington, Grief/Mourning, Homophobia, Hurt/Comfort, Implied Sexual Content, Multi, Mutual Pining, Original Character-centric, Protective Nancy Wheeler, Racism, Redemption, Slow Burn, Swearing, Teen Romance, Teenage Dorks, Teenage Drama, Unrequited Love

Language: English

Characters: Benny Hammond, Billy Hargrove, Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Kali Prasad, Karen Wheeler, Lucas Sinclair, Martin Brenner, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Neil Hargrove, Original Characters, Robin Buckley, Sam Owens (Stranger Things), Scott Clarke, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Jonathan Byers/Original Female Character(s), Nancy Wheeler/Original Male Character(s), Robin Buckley/Original Female Character(s), Steve Harrington/Original Female Character(s), Will Byers/Original Male Character(s)

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Summary:

CASEY COLLINS HAD dreams. He'd been raised that way, to chase what he wanted and never give up — even if it did get him into trouble. It shouldn't have been a surprise to anyone that having two government-hating hippies for parents would turn out a new

generation of youth with an attitude for taking down the Man or die trying! Well, maybe not die exactly. Casey wasn't an idiot, he was an idiot with a plan. He'd been chasing that good story for years, looking for all the ways he could prove that the Man wasn't a man at all, but a monster hiding in the dark, waiting for its moment to strike. But no matter how hard he looked, nothing ever came of it, because nothing bad ever happened in Hawkins.

THEN, WILL BYERS went missing and everything turned upside down. When it becomes personal for his family, he sets out to do anything he can to uncover the truth, and uncover all the secrets Hawkins was keeping — to cross the line, to annoy his way into whatever secret that rag-tag group was hiding. When he finds himself in a total shit show just a year after the incident, he falls helplessly in love with a girl just as big and bright as him — only Casey was a free agent, and Nancy Wheeler had already partnered up without him.

TEEN AGE RIOT

ACT I — TRUTH OR PERSIH!

chapter one, little old hawkins

CASEY

TUESDAY

OCTOBER 30th, 1984

HAWKINS HIGH SCHOOL

THE TRUTH HAD NEVER BEEN AS SIMPLE AS BLACK AND WHITE facts and story telling. Truth had layers, hiding beneath masks and facades, carefully kept from prying eyes that weren't supposed to look at all. There were grey areas, and *secrets* — and Casey Collins was a fan of neither.

He liked when things were black and white. It was easier to guess what the real truth was, to suss out the saints and sinners, who was full of lies and deceit. Black and white meant the suspects were clear, and he didn't have to play guessing games on who was or wasn't a liar. "*Liars don't contribute nothin' to this already shit world,*" his dad had told him, drilling the importance of always telling the truth into him since a young age. "*I wouldn't trust a liar as far as I could throw 'em.*"

Because of his old man, Casey didn't trust liars, either. *He didn't trust men like Jim Hopper, or girls like Elizabeth Richards.* He didn't trust anyone who had something to hide, and those two had *treasure troves* overflowing with gold built on hidden secrets and whispers of things unmentionable. They weren't the only ones, but they lied to him the *most* — straight to his face and with no remorse.

Hawkins itself was a town full of people hiding things. He'd seen it

first hand, like in his neighbor who'd been cheating on his wife for five months... *with another man*. It was *easy* for Casey to notice when someone was hiding something — it was almost like a sixth sense he'd been born with. He was *good* at it. His parents had never been able to tell him little white lies, and his brothers and sisters *certainly* could never keep something from him, no matter how hard they tried.

His talent for finding dirt on people is what landed him the job as the head reporter for the school newspaper. Nobody loved gossip more than small town teens with nothing better to do — they loved to know the ins and outs of who was screwing who, the latest DUI report or who got busted by Mr. Polinski for smoking pot beneath the bleachers. He wrote it *all*, crafted his stories from the things he found hidden in hallways and bathrooms.

Secrets had never been safe from Casey Collins.

That was, until, a strange unfolding of events happened that turned the town of Hawkins upside down.

When Will Byers had gone missing, died, and came back to life all in the span of a single week, his radar went off the charts, ringing in his ears that something was *definitely* going on that the rest of the town wasn't privy to. Mysterious disappearances throughout in the forest, the unusual electrical outages and the *suspicious* presence of the federal government in their little town did nothing to sway him otherwise — something *big* had happened, and he was going to find out *what*.

And besides, it became completely personal the second he heard his mothers cries of anguish behind her bedroom door.

He thought it would be easy to get *someone* to crack, to corner them at just the right time and get them to spill their guts. The individuals involved were an odd combination of people who'd never interact under any other circumstances, and Casey was *sure* one of them would be willing to cough up the details; they didn't all get along, anyways. It *should've* been easy — how hard could it be to break down a bunch of scrawny little kids?

Really hard, apparently.

During the first three months after Will Byers came back to life, Casey had tried every day to coax the four young boys involved into telling him their deep, dark, secret — after all, Casey had two little brothers of his own, and he was good at getting *them* to do what he wanted. Except these four boys weren't like his brothers at all, they were *little shits*, and not a single one of them could be persuaded or bribed.

When he tried again on the fourth and fifth month, he came face to face with their *freakin' babysitter*, who was, if he quietly admitted to himself, *terrifying when she was pissed off*. But Casey wasn't scared off easily, and when he told her everything she wanted to hear, that he'd leave them alone and never bring up their secrets again, he became a liar for the first time — the very thing he hated the most.

It was only a means to an end, though, and Casey thought he'd earned and deserved the right to lie.

So he watched, and he *waited*, and when a year passed by, Casey saw his chance — *and he took it*.

On one particularly determined night, he'd tracked them down to the Arcade Palace in town. Some would call *stalking*, but it was never as simple as *stalking* to Casey. He was a man on a *mission*, and sometimes that mission required investigative work, some undercover *eavesdropping*. So he followed the boys and their babysitter, and listened to every word they uttered over the loud arcade music.

To his irritation, it had ended up being an incredibly *boring* stake-out, listening to a bunch of nerdy *fuckers* have a good time geeking around *Dig Dug*.

But then, he noticed Will Byers slip outside, and Casey followed him with his heart pounding in his chest — *it could finally be his chance to seek answers*. Only it wasn't, because all the kid did was freeze up, and any notion of even *trying* to get him to talk flew out the window the second that *damn babysitter* got in the way again.

His only consolation was that it *rattled* her, and a rattled person was bound to spill their secrets one way or the other.

It felt *good* to get under Elizabeth Richards' skin. She'd been, to put it nicely, *a stubborn pain in the ass* during the whole debacle over the year he'd been investigating. She was the worst one of them all — the hardest to crack, the hardest to get through to, the most *hell bent* on keeping their secret. Casey had made the mistake of underestimating just how determined she was to hide it — how hard-headed and *mean* she could be about it, how far she was willing to go to see the truth taken to the grave and buried with her.

So to see her come *unraveled* at the thought that Casey was onto them might've given him more satisfaction than what was probably appropriate for the circumstances — he shouldn't be *proud* he got the town basket case so close to losing her shit (again), but he *was*.

Because of this, he'd chosen to fixate on all of Elizabeth's dirty secrets — she was *going* to crack from his incessant pestering eventually.

So, everyday, he watched her from afar, becoming increasingly depressed at the lack of action or reaction. It was *boring* to watch the same exact thing everyday — Elizabeth Richards was as *normal* as everyone else was, despite what the masses of Hawkins High said. She worked a regular job, did regular teenage things, and lived an almost boring life — just like everyone else in town (bar that month or so she disappeared off the face of the earth and came back unscathed, but that was a secret to uncover for another time).

This went on for nearly five months over the summer and into the new school year, and the only strange occurrence was her weekly visit to the *power plant* in the woods. He didn't know what business a teenage girl had there, but Casey had never been quite brave enough to follow her there and find out what.

She sat across the high school parking lot in a perfectly polished red *BMW*, laughing at something the idiot sitting in the front seat had said. Casey rolls his eyes, mumbling to himself as he watches their every move. His fingers toy with a wheel on his skateboard, making it spin in circles as absolutely *nothing* of interest happened. He shouldn't have been surprised — Elizabeth Richards and Steve

Harrington did the same thing almost *every day*.

"I really don't know what you were expecting," a voice next to him mumbles, and he rolls his eyes at Charlotte (or Charlie, as she preferred) Brightly's painfully accurate observation. "D'you think they're going to hop out of the car at any second with guns blazing?"

Casey squints, and crosses his arms like a child. "No, don't be stupid."

"*You're* the one being stupid," Charlie declares. Turning to look at him with a glare, she shakes her head, pink bangs falling into her eyes and behind her glasses with the movement. "Why can't you just let this go?"

On his other side, a second voice whines. Andrew Jenkins, more often called Andy, pops a skittle into his mouth and grumbles. "We can't have *one* peaceful morning, can we — "

Casey elbows him, and huffs. "You *know* why."

Charlie drops the subject, and Andy falls silent.

Though he'd never admit it out loud, they both had a point. He *was* obsessed, though really, who could blame him? He certainly didn't need to hear it from either of them — not when they knew all the things that kept him so wound tight.

And anyways, it was a completely and totally boring morning, so Charlie could *shove* it. In fact, Casey was nearly ready to give up on the prospect of finding something juicy when a bright blue *Camaro* screeches into the lot, music blaring and tires swerving into a spot just across from them. Perking up, he watches as a small redhead exits the car first, rolling away on a skateboard, followed by a tall, toned blond. *These were new faces*, Casey thinks excitedly. *New faces, new stories.*

Andy laughs. "*Dude*, get a load of this guy!"

"My god," Charlie mumbles, rolling her eyes at the gaggle of girls already ogling the new stranger. "Doesn't anybody have any standards?"

Casey grins, and pats them both on the back before fishing into his pocket for his tape recorder. "Let's find out, shall we?"

His two friends share a look, and shrug. *They were too used to his antics by now.* Charlie and Andy were his best friends, they had been since Kindergarten. They lived on the same block, and had spent nearly every day with each other as long as he could remember. He knew them like the back of his own hand, just like they knew him.

And they knew *all* too well there was no stopping Casey.

But, as it turned out, it was almost impossible to catch the new kid — who he learned through word of mouth was called Billy Hargrove — around the halls that entire morning. Hoards of his peers crowded around Billy, wanting to know every little detail of what brought him to their small town. Even Tommy Hagan, the resident leech of the school, quickly attached himself to the cool and shiny new toy of Hawkins High.

Some time after fifth period, he sulks out of the science room, feeling entirely unaccomplished. And to make matters even *worse*, when his eyes trail from the ground to the front of him, he finds three of his suspects chatting merrily away.

You see, he had this *list*, a list of names that he kept in his back pocket at all times. It was a list that kept him going, that reminded him of *why* he was doing everything he could to unlock all the secrets kept from him. It was a long list, it was a *sad* list, but he memorized every line and never forgot a letter.

While Jonathan Byers wasn't a *suspect*, necessarily, the two girls with him certainly *were*. In fact, Elizabeth Richards and Nancy Wheeler were closer to the top of his list, in red and underlined. They knew the *most*, were the *biggest* criminals making up his evidence. While Elizabeth was well known for her affiliation with Will Byers and the other boys she looked after, it was *Nancy* that brought a different light to his investigation. It was *Nancy* who was Barbara Holland's best friend, and she had been there when the girl went missing shortly after the Byers boy.

Barbara, who went missing the day after —

"Casey!" a voice calls out, breaking his thoughts from the dark path they wandered, and footsteps softly come up from behind him before a hand settles on his arm.

Turning to face the voice, he forgets about his troubles, and turns on a bright and devilish smile, resting his shoulders on a set of lockers and shoving his hands into his pockets casually. "Hi Tina."

Tina Peterson turns a light shade of pink, and plays with the corner of a bright orange piece of paper. "So, you know I'm throwing a Halloween party this year... I'd really love it if you came."

She hands him the paper, and he scans the flyers quickly before folding it nearly and putting it in his pocket. Leaning in a little closer, his grin grows, raking his eyes up and down the girl before him, delighting him when she shivers. "I might."

Tina tucks a piece of hair behind her ear. "You can bring your friends too."

"Yeah? Maybe I will then..." he trails off as his eyes slip just past the pretty girl to someone he'd been trying to get a hold of *all damn day*. He stood there alone and angry, watching a flurry of brunette hair stomp away with a decidedly *pissed* pep to her step. Following his gaze, Casey internally swears at Elizabeth scurrying away from Billy, and realizes he just missed something *good*.

"Uh, yeah, yeah I'll be there Tina," he quickly says, too distracted to notice her shoulders slump. "I'll talk to you later."

Fumbling for his tape recorder, Casey nearly sprints across the hallway to catch the new kid off guard. At just the right second, he pounced, cornering his victim with one of his signature dazzling grins. "Hey, you're Billy, right?"

Raising a perfectly sculpted eyebrow, Billy Hargrove straightens his back, nostrils flaring. "Yeah? What about it?"

"I'm Casey, head reporter for the school newspaper," Casey responds, sticking out a hand for a friendly shake. When Billy doesn't take it, he awkwardly sets it back on his recorder. "I just uh, I wanted to ask you

a few questions so we can all get to know you, a little intro piece for the paper written by yours truly."

Billy clicks his tongue against his teeth. "And why would I do that for *you*?"

At first, Casey thinks that maybe he was being a little *shy*. He was the new kid in a strange town, after all. But then, he accepts that *nothing* about Billy was shy, from the way he stood to the way he flexed every part of himself. And after several seconds, he sees that *disgust* in his eyes that Casey had been faced with before — and his heart drops into his stomach.

Hawkins was such a small town. It was an *old* town. And all old towns came with their problems, problems that Casey Collins and others like him were too familiar with. He's grown up here all his life, and all his life there would be somebody that looked at him *differently* for who he was, for what he looked like, for who his dad was.

And Billy Hargrove had that look written all over his face.

Uncomfortable with the sudden tension, Casey clears his throat and forces the smile to stay plastered on his face. "You know what, it's cool! I'll give you a few more days to get used to being in our little old Hawkins. It was uh, it was nice to meet you dude."

Billy doesn't respond, just rolls his eyes, and Casey smiles on last time before turning on his heel and letting his face fall. He grumbles to himself all the way into his next class, his stomach twisting and turning at how impossibly *shitty* his entire day had been, how he should have *seen* this one coming, how he didn't really want to face the new kid and the hate sparking in his eyes ever again.

He tucks his tape recorder away, and sighs.

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TUESDAY

OCTOBER 30th, 1984

HAWKINS NATIONAL LABORATORY

FOR HOURS AFTER SCHOOL, CASEY SULKS AROUND TOWN, KICKING ROCKS along the sidewalk and holding his beloved skateboard in his arms. It was *pathetic* how pouty he'd become throughout the day.

Casey had always been so confident with every single part of himself. He loved his looks, he loved his brains, he loved the chase for secrets and how good he was at finding them. He knew the right thing to say to girls to have them swooning, and making friends came as easily as breathing air. And not once, *ever*, did Casey fail in getting exactly what he wanted.

Only, this time, the chase was starting to wear him out. He'd been at it since the moment Will Byers came back to school, since this strange group of people came together to hide his secret. He'd been at it for a year with little to *no* answers — at least, nothing that made any *sense*. The few pieces of evidence he did have were like a riddle he couldn't unscramble, and the longer he went out trying to solve it, the more the riddle became more complicated.

It was a blow to his confidence and ego. And his little *conversation* with new boy Billy only served to make him feel worse.

And as if his day wasn't bad enough, he couldn't even hang out with his friends after school! Charlie had claimed she had to work that evening at the local movie theater, though a part of him didn't really believe her — despite being best friends, the two happened to bump heads *a lot*, and Casey's obsession with finding the truth sometimes made them argue, and he thought she was avoiding him. But, in Andy's case, he'd been grounded for nearly two weeks now after his mom caught him smoking pot in his basement, so they haven't had any after-school shenanigans in a while. And though they weren't his only friends, as Casey had a lot of them, they were his *best* friends,

and he didn't feel like being around anyone else.

After a while of walking around town, he nearly decides to sulk his way back home and lick his wounds when a familiar car catches his eye.

And for the first time all day, Casey thinks that maybe he had an opportunity to turn things around. He decides to take *one more chance* at action.

At a safe distance, he follows the car on his skateboard all the way out of town and onto a road hidden by the trees. There, a building lay in the middle of the forest, a tall electric fence surrounding the perimeter. A gasp lodges in his chest when he reads the lettering painted across white vans parked across the lot — *Hawkins Power and Light*.

He'd never been brave enough to follow Elizabeth to the power plant in the woods. Never been brave enough, until *today*, until *now*.

He finds a tree close to the fence (though not close enough to risk an accident) and climbs it to the very top, finding a comfortable enough position to stake out in. He fishes into his backpack for a set of binoculars, his tape recorder, and a polaroid camera. Turning on the tape recorder, he whispers to it several times as a test before setting it in his lap. Bringing the former up to his eyes, Casey squints through the lens and watches as Elizabeth meets Jim Hopper next to his police *Chevy*. They share a cigarette, and exchange small talk for several incredibly *annoying* minutes. Then, sitting up a little straighter, he watches as they walk together to the front doors of the power plant.

"There's an older man waiting for them," Casey speaks aloud, just enough for the recorder to pick up his spoken notes. "Probably mid 50's to 60's, salt and pepper hair. Familiar with Richards and Hopper — the two men are shaking hands. There's a name tag on his white lab coat, can't make it out."

Before he could miss it, he sets down the binoculars and picks up his camera, and takes several snapshots of the trio before they disappear inside. He tucks the photos into his bag, and resumes investigating

the building with the binoculars.

"Lots of lab coats around here," he mutters, letting his eyes sweep all across the building. "Counting two guards by the gate, two by the front entrance, and several walking around the building. There are four... no, five of those white vans parked in the lot, and two military grade vehicles on the side."

He takes a few more notes of his surroundings, and several more pictures, before feeling satisfied. Then, he sits back carefully, feeling his back lightly scratch on the trunk of the tree. There, he waits, watching the sun fade beneath the trees, reds and oranges casting shadows below him. He's not sure how long he waits, but it isn't for very long, and when his targets finally come out of the building, he sits up with a sigh.

Snapping a few more pictures, Casey waits until Elizabeth's old *Honda* and the Chief's creaky *Chevy* follow each other out of the parking lot and down the road before joining them. Once more, he's careful to stay just far enough away on his skateboard so they couldn't see him, rolling down the pavement this way until they reach town.

He makes it home ten minutes later. The aroma of dinner fills the house, and his mother hums along to a radio in the kitchen— it makes him smile for the first time in hours. Throughout the house, noise overwhelms his senses, though he always liked how loud it was. Passing by his dad asleep on the couch, and his siblings chasing each other down the hall, he scurries to his bedroom and locks the door behind him.

Under the bed, he reaches for a bulletin board and drags it out from its hiding place. Setting it atop the mattress, he slings off his backpack and shuffles through the many pictures he'd gathered, and adds them to his collection.

Each space waited for a new piece of evidence. His eyes flit over it all, reading each headline and date beneath the polaroids under his breath.

NOVEMBER 15th, 1983

Photo captured the evening Will Byers is found alive. Pictured: Jim Hopper spotted outside Hawkins Emergency Room, entering an unmarked black vehicle.

FEBRUARY 10th, 1984

*Photo captured four days after Elizabeth Richards is reported missing. Pictured: Nancy Wheeler and Jonathan Byers speaking outside of Hawkins High. Keywords noted: " **THAT THING** ", " **THE LAB** ", and " **ELLE** "*

APRIL 26th, 1984

Pictured: Joyce Byers seen speaking with Jim Hopper outside the Hawkins Police Station. Not Pictured: Jonathan Byers comforting Will Byers in the backseat of their Ford Pinto — he appears sick.

JUNE 14th, 1984

*Photo captured the day of Elizabeth Richards' birthday. Pictured: Elizabeth and an unknown woman argue in front of Melvald's General Store. An unknown man breaks up the fight and takes Elizabeth in his car. Key phrase noted: " **YOU WEREN'T THERE** "*

AUGUST 22nd, 1984

Photo one captured at ten p.m. Pictured: Elizabeth Richards found sitting at the sight where Will Byers's body had first been found and proclaimed dead.

AUGUST 22nd, 1984

*Photo Two captured after Kyle Donovan's back to school party. Pictured: Steve Harrington leaving the party intoxicated and upset. Not pictured: Elizabeth Richards picking him up at the corner of Birch and Lincoln. Key phrase noted: " **WE KILLED BARB** "*

SEPTEMBER 1st, 1984

Pictured: Steve Harrington and Nancy Wheeler parked outside of the Holland Residence. They appear to be arguing.

OCTOBER 29th, 1984

Pictured: Will Byers, Michael Wheeler, Lucas Sinclair, Dustin Henderson and Elizabeth Richards at the Palace Arcade.

OCTOBER 29th, 1984

Pictured: Will Byers outside of the Arcade Palace. He appears to be frozen in fear.

There were more pictures, but something told Casey those were the most important. With his small box of thumbtacks in hand, he adds the photos he'd taken just hours prior, marking them with the date and description. Then, his eyes find the dozens of sticky-notes he'd written over the last year, little details of everything he knew had happened when such an unassuming little boy went missing in such a small, old town.

From his back pocket, he takes out a worn and folded paper, a note that bothered him and motivated him the *most*. On a messy, scrambled list stained with tears, he reads:

THE VICTIMS.

WILL BYERS: MISSING

BARBARA HOLLAND: MISSING

HENRY PORTLAND: MISSING

DALE WALKER: MISSING

LOUIS ROBINSON: MISSING

KELLY-ANNE PETERS: DECEASED

BENNY HAMMOND: DECEASED

KNOWN INVOLVEMENT.

JOYCE AND JONATHAN BYERS. DUSTIN HENDERSON. LUCAS SINCLAIR. MICHAEL WHEELER. STEVE HARRINGTON. DAVID O'BANNON. JIM HOPPER. ELIZABETH RICHARDS. NANCY WHEELER.

ELLE?

Casey takes his pen, and scratches out Will's name. Next to Louis Robison, he dashes a line through *missing* and writes *deceased* instead — the news had come out a couple weeks ago about it. And then, he underlines a name, and circles it twice.

On his nightstand, his eyes find a picture.

The truth had never been black and white, no matter how much he

wanted it to. He reached for it and grasped at nothing, his riddles and questions turning into more gibberish the longer he thought of them, the longer he dwelled on whatever horror made them.

Mouth going dry, Casey breathes through the lump in his throat. He wanted to uncover all the secrets little old Hawkins was hiding from him. He wanted to ease the pain his mother had been through. He wanted answers.

And there was *nothing* he wouldn't do to get them.

Author's Note:

hello everyone! this fic is the second part of my st series, teenage wasteland! you can find the first part, blinging lights, published under the series as well!!! i hope you all enjoy this fic and come to love casey as much as i do! <3